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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

JCSM-372-72  
16 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Response to NSSM 157 (U)

1. (U) Reference is made to:

a. JCSM-351-72, <sup>7-35702/72</sup> dated 28 July 1972, subject: "Chemical Warfare Policy (U)," which forwarded the recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a US draft treaty on chemical warfare (CW).

b. A memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), I-26439/72, dated 14 August 1972, subject as above, which requested the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff concerning the response to NSSM 157 and, particularly, the options therein.

2. (U) As requested in reference 1b, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed the study and recognize it as a reasonably balanced presentation of the major available alternatives, their relative merits, and other relevant considerations.

3. (S) In assessing the proposed negotiating alternatives, certain factors have a major bearing on the selection of a proper option.

a. There is no dependable way to verify compliance with most prohibitions or limitations on chemical weapons. Even onsite inspections (OSI) cannot provide effective verification regarding CW activities. Therefore, in the absence of any effective means of insuring that other nations would comply with CW prohibitions, it is imperative that the United States maintain an effective CW retaliatory capability in order to provide an effective CW deterrent and to preclude being placed at a significant disadvantage should CW hostilities occur.

Classified by Director, J-5  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
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b. In terms of negotiating goals, the United States should seek an agreement that would limit the USSR to a retaliatory capability in CW.

c. A production ban, which is a significant factor in several proposals in the study, would effectively eliminate the capability to maintain a viable retaliatory CW capability. Reliance on the chemical stocks of the vintage and composition of the current US stockpile to provide a continuing deterrent is unacceptable due to uncertainties concerning their remaining shelf life/employment life. The modernization of the current stockpile with binary type weapons, the most efficient and cost effective of the feasible courses of action, is essential to a credible retaliatory/deterrent CW capability.

d. While no truly effective and acceptable means of verifying a stockpile limit or a production ban exist, the principle of OSI should be advocated by the United States. An obligation to accept inspection of certain declared facilities would appear to have merit in the international arena.

e. A unilateral statement by the United States regarding a substantial reduction of US stockpiles independent of, or coupled with, any other option is not in the US security interest. The same applies to a unilateral declaration of a moratorium on production. Such measures would result in immediate limitations on US CW capabilities without similar restraints on other nations. They would probably remain as permanent constraints even if international agreement on such measures never materializes.

4. (TS) Based on the above considerations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that a treaty limiting stockpiles to retaliatory levels and prohibiting the transfer of lethal agents for weapons purposes would not adversely affect the national security. This combination of proposals more nearly reflects the approach of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to a new US CW treaty initiative forwarded in reference 1a. The Joint Chiefs of Staff can support a proposal for a retaliatory/deterrent stockpile limit at approximately the current US level, with provision for modernization (binary production), accompanied, at least in initial negotiations, by a limited OSI requirement at military production centers by an international team.

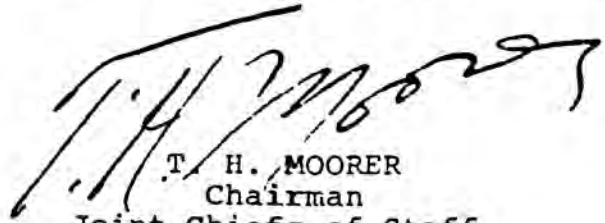
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5. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that you support these views and forward them to the National Security Council.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



T. H. MOORER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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